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CONSUMER TIME

R- 220

C762

TRANSPORTATION OF FOOD

Resume
NETWORK: NBC

DATE: November 18, 1944

ORIGIN: WRC

TIME: 12:15-12:30 PM- EWT

(Produced by the Office of Distribution of the War Food Administration, this script is for reference only and may not be broadcast without special permission. The title CONSUMER TIME is restricted to network broadcast of the program...presented for more than eleven years in the interest of consumers.)

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1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL
 2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!
 3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER
 4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available as a public service for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME, by the War Food Administration. And here are Mrs. Freyman and Johnny...
 5. JOHN: The story of how food is transported in America...reads like the story of wartime America herself.
 6. FREYMAN: A dramatic chapter...in a dramatic era... This is the story of how the most abundant harvests in all history are transported over the entire country...and how this food finally reaches your town, your grocer, your table.
 7. JOHN: This is the story of how these food supplies are rushed...on schedule...to reach the waiting cargo boats, for shipment overseas.
- PAUSE:
8. FREYMAN: Tonight at your dinner table...your family may say to you...
 9. MAN: "These pork chops sure are good, mom!"
 10. JOHN: Half-way round the world...in Moscow, Soviet Russia...a Russian soldier may remark at his dinner....
 11. MAN: (SAME AS ABOVE...IN RUSSIAN)

12. JOHN: (REITERATING) Comrade...this is good meat!

PAUSE;

13. MAN: How does this meat get to your table? How does it get around the world to our Allies?

14. JOHN: Suppose we start at the beginning of our story. Let's go first to the wide, rolling cattle country...somewhere west of the Mississippi...(FADE)

15. SOUND: GALLOPING HORSE...FADE IN...HOLD UP LOUD

16. COWBOY: (SHOUTING) Git along there! Git along dogies! (ETC. FADE)

17. SOUND: HORSE HOOFS FADE...HOLD UNDER...AND OUT.

18. JOHN: Round-up time! And the bellowing, charging cattle are driven by the hundreds into the dusty corrals...through narrow gates... where the cattle are waiting.

19. SOUND: ONE TRUCK AFTER ANOTHER FADING UP AND OUT...BRING IN ON ABOVE... HOLD UNDER.

20. MAN: Up the ramps...into the trucks...and they're whirled away to the nearest railroad terminal, where freight cars are waiting.

21. JOHN: Once, cattle had to be driven on foot, long tedious days and weeks across the plains...along the trails...to stockyards and markets which were far away.

22. SOUND: TRAIN WHISTLE FADES IN ON ABOVE...THEN FREIGHT TRAIN...HOLD UP... THEN FADE...AND UNDER.

23. JOHN: But...it doesn't take long to transport them nowadays!

24. JOHN: You've seen cattle cars speeding by in freight trains. They're built to hold thirty head of cattle. Over 135 sheep and hogs. They're made with open slats to give plenty of ventilation.

25. MAN: Some cars have two stories...sheep or hogs ride downstairs and upstairs too, in these cars. Every 30 hours on the journey, the train is stopped. And the livestock is actually taken out and exercised.

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26. JOHN: In a matter of hours..maybe only overnight...the cattle arrives at the stockyards, and packing house. Here...the beef, lamb, pork, veal...is processed.
27. MAN: From the time beef cattle enters the packing house...it takes an average of three days for beef to be processed, chilled, and ready for the market.
28. JOHN: For pork, about five days...
29. FREYMAN: How about bacon...doesn't that take longer?
30. JOHN: Bacon takes around twenty to twenty-five days to cure and smoke.
31. MAN: The meat is then put into storage...awaiting order, and shipment.
32. FREYMAN: Well now, don't they freeze meat to ship it away, Johnny?
33. JOHN: Well, we do freeze some meat for overseas shipment. But not much for home consumption. Say...did you ever go in a cold storage freezer?
34. FREYMAN: Goodness no!
35. JOHN: Oh, that's quite a place. Floor after floor of great wide rooms. Ceiling's a network of pipes covered with thick, glistening frost.
(FADING) I went through a cold storage freezer once...
36. MACK: O.K. Come on in here, mister, Look out for the door.
37. SOUND: HEAVY DOOR SLAMS SHUT
(CHAMBER MIKE)
38. JOHN: Boy, that's a heavy door, all right. Looks like a door to a safe.
39. MACK: It's gotta be heavy...and insulated. I mean this is COLD in here, and we have to keep it cold.
40. JOHN: (COLD, SHIVER...ETC.) I just hope we can get that door open again.
41. MACK: (LAUGH) Don't worry about that. Say, suppose you had to work in here five or six hours at a stretch.
42. JOHN: I'm afraid I couldn't take it. Just look at this place. Frost thick all over the ceiling...and hanging off those big pipes.

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43. MACK: Those pipes are full of brine. They're what make it cold, you know.
44. JOHN: (HUSHED) It's as still and silent as the dead of winter...
45. MACK: (LAUGH) It ought to be...at this temperature. Now, mister, did you ever see so much meat in all your life as we got here?
46. JOHN: Looks like miles and miles of it. Meat as far as I can see. Say, why is it all wrapped up in cloth?
48. MACK: That's muslin and paper wrapping. Helps bleach the meat...and smooth the surface. See how careful it's pinned down?
49. JOHN: Yes...say this meat is really frozen stiff, isn't it?
50. MACK: Just knock one with your knuckles and see. Go ahead.
51. SOUND: KNOCK ON HARD SURFACE
52. JOHN: (LAUGH) Boy it's solid as a rock.
53. MACK: Ought to be...how cold do you suppose it is in here?
54. JOHN: Well...there's a thermometer over there. I'll see. (BRIEF PAUSE) Hey, now wait. It couldn't be.
55. MACK: Eight below zero. Yes sir. We keep her down all right. Always around...(FADING)...five to ten below.
- PAUSE: (CHAMBER OUT)
56. JOHN: I got out of there in a hurry...but not before he'd shown me into a few more sub-zero rooms...and you bet my knees were knocking together when we got out to the warm street...where it was only thirty-two.
57. FREYMAN: Did the man show you those...what you call "tunnels"...for freezing meat?
58. JOHN: No...that's brand new...and there aren't many of them. But he told me about them. Interesting, too. They call it "sharp freezing." The meat hangs from the ceiling on a track...and travels slowly through this tunnel.
59. FREYMAN: And by the time the meat arrives at the other end...it's frozen!

60. JOHN: Yes...it's "sharp-frozen". It's about 20 below in there. Takes around four days for a piece of meat to go through the tunnel. Meat just goes in and comes out in a steady, uninterrupted flow.
61. FREYMAN: Well, now Johnny...one other thing...how about salting meat to preserve it? How's that done?
62. JOHN: That's interesting too. The meat is taken into cellars, way down underground.
- 62A. FREYMAN: "Salt cellars," Johnny?
63. JOHN: If you like.....Mrs. Freyman. "Curing cellars", they call them. It's kind of spooky, down there, with great huge mounds of glistening salt. The meat...thousands of pounds of it...is all packed away in the salt piles.
64. FREYMAN: And how long does the meat have to stay in there, Johnny?
65. JOHN: About three weeks in the cellar. Then it's packed in wooden boxes and a lot more salt is thrown in. One of the oldest ways of...
66. FREYMAN: One of the oldest ways of preserving meat...and we're still using it.
67. JOHN: Sure we are. Now...let's go on with our story of how meat is transported.
68. MAN: Now...the meat is ready to be shipped. Livestock that has been carefully bred. Cattle herded in from the plains...hailed mile after mile by trucks and freight car. Now chilled or frozen...salted, cured...ready to be shipped away to its final destination.
69. JOHN: And...its final destination? Let's say that Russia has ordered from the United States...well, a hundred carloads of meat...a hundred carloads of meat...headed for Moscow.

PAUSE:

70. MAN: (TENSE NARRATION) In Washington, Mr. Eldon Richardson, of the War Food Administration, dictates a wire to his secretary...(FADE)

71. RICHARDSON: (HEIGHTENED TONE) Take a wire, Mrs. Spencer, to our Chicago office...(DELIBERATE) Fourteen carloads of salt meat...must be in Seattle by Monday morning.
72. SPENCER: Yes' sir.
73. RICHARDSON: (TENSE) Now this wire, Mrs. Spence...to Omaha! Eight carloads of meat...in Seattle by Monday morning. Now...wire Kansas City...eleven carloads...Denver...(ETC...FADING)
74. SOUND: TELEGRAPH KEY TICKING UNDER ABOVE AS HE FADES...BRING UP FOR VERY BRIEF BRIDGE THEN HOLD UNDER FOLLOWING, AND FADE OUT.)
75. JOHN: (FAST) Washington has been notified...that on a certain day, at a certain hour...Russian ships will be waiting in the port of Seattle. That notification...is the first step of the long journey. And the cargo...the meat...must be there on schedule.
76. MAN: That means...there must be no delays...nothing to stand in the way of this vital shipment. At first it seems...that some of the warehousemen are asked to do the impossible...(FADING OUT)
77. MACK: (FADING IN) But I tell you we can't...we can't get that meat out here in that shorta time.
78. BOSS: You've GOT TO, understand. It's an order from Washington. That meat has to be in Seattle...on schedule!
79. MACK: That means we'll have to work on Sunday.
80. BOSS: Then work on Sunday...
81. MACK: I'll have to get extra help from all over.
82. BOSS: Well, get 'em.
83. MACK: (RESIGNED...SIGH) All right, boss...as usual...we'll do the impossible! (FADE)
84. MAN: (MUSING NARRATION) Fourteen carloads from Chicago.....eight cars from Omaha...from Kansas City, Denver...and other great packing centers...cars will be loaded...refrigerated...headed West. All must arrive in the port of Seattle, on schedule. For Russian ships cannot wait.

85. JOHN: (TENSE NARRATION) The warehousemen spring into action...they roll the heavy hand trucks through the swirling vapors of freezing temperatures. With strength of giants, they swing down the 180 pound boxes of meat...load and wheel them out to the elevators. On the tracks below, the freight cars are already cooled...and waiting.
86. MAN: Slowly the cars are filled. Fourteen carloads from Chicago.
87. SOUND: (SLOW PUFFING OF ENGINE)
88. JOHN: The yard engine...puffing and steaming, backs up to its load...the train is joined. These are refrigerator cars. Big compartments at each end are filled with crushed ice and salt. The cars are heavily insulated...carefully built so that the cold air circulates over and under the meat.
89. MAN: Inside these cars...the temperature must be kept below 26 degrees.
90. JOHN: So...along the way, about every 24 hours...the speeding freight must stop...must stop at an icing station...to have the cars re-filled with ice.
91. JOHN: But now...the train pulls out of Chicago...headed west...
92. SOUND: TRAIN FADE IN ON ABOVE...HOLD UP AFTER SPEECH...FADE AND HOLD UNDER.
93. MAN: In North Dakota...just outside of Grand Forks...the engineer reads his orders again.
94. SOUND: TRAIN UP
95. ENGINEER:2:(SHOUTING OVER) We stopping over for re-icing, Joe?
96. ENGINEER: Yeah...that's what the orders say. We got to stop at Grand Forks.
97. SOUND: TRAIN HOLD...THEN FADE OUT.
98. JOHN: The train pulls slowly to a stop at the icing station, just outside of town. And the tedious job of re-icing the refrigerator cars begins.

99. MAN: For by now...the temperature inside has begun to rise slowly... almost imperceptibly...but these cars must be kept cold.
100. JOHN: They're backed onto the siding, where big platforms stand, high as the roofs of the cars. The cakes of ice are shoved along the platforms, broken up in chunks, dropped, along with the salt, into the open bunkers in every car.
101. MAN: Rumbling and clattering, the train jerks forward, and stops... as little by little, one by one, the cars receive their ice.
102. JOHN: Then...safe! The meat is safe...below freezing...for another twenty-four hours. The icing over with...the train moves westward with its precious load.
103. SOUND: TRAIN UP AGAIN...LOW ON ABOVE. HOLD FOR BRIDGE, THEN OUT.
104. JOHN: And on Monday morning...the trainload of meat from Chicago...along with the other trains called in from all parts of the country... pull into the busy, teeming port of Seattle. One hundred carloads of meat...on time!
105. MAN: And the Russian ships are there...waiting to receive their cargo.
106. SOUND: LONG LOW BOAT WHISTLE
107. MAN: They will be loaded...and then will set out to sea again...across the cold waters of the North...sixteen days to the port of Valdivostock.
108. JOHN: From Valdivostock, the meat is loaded onto the cars of the Siberian Railway...hailed for weeks across the frozen wasteland of Siberia... thousands of miles to Moscow. Then...no wonder that Russian soldier says:
109. BOY: (IN RUSSIAN AS BEFORE) Machish aual izchi t'salu m'chek!
110. MAN: (HEARTY, TRANSLATING) You know...that's good meat.
- PAUSE:
111. JOHN: Yes, that's how our Russian Allies...get a shipment of meat from the U. S. A.

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112. MAN: Of course there can be one more complicated step in this chain of events that gets the food overseas. That is when occasionally the ships cannot arrive on schedule...if ice...or engine trouble have delayed them on the high seas...
113. JOHN: Then...the refrigerator cars have to be iced again as they stand on the track at the docks. If the convoy is delayed over a week... then the frozen meat has to be unloaded...and hauled away to wait in a cold storage warehouse.
114. MAN: Yes...one more step. But finally...finally the ships arrive... and our part is done...our schedule met...our task accomplished.
115. FREYMAN: Now...now that we've heard how food is transported across the country to go overseas...I want to hear about how this meat gets to my table. To the table of the American housewife.
116. JOHN: Yes, that's the next part of our story. Back in the early days of our country, food naturally wasn't transported very far.
117. FREYMAN: Well, I guess not...by horse and wagon.
118. JOHN: There wasn't any way to preserve meat, for instance, in cold storage. Each community had its own slaughter house...and the farmers of course, cured their own meat.
119. FREYMAN: Oh...that's right. And every farmhouse had barrels of brine for pickling and preserving.
120. JOHN: Sure! And you know...I got to wondering as I went through that gigantic cold-storage meat freezer the other day...miles of floor space...the temperature at eight below zero. I was impressed by the great efficiency of it...those long coils of pipes covered with heavy ice and frost. PAUSE...And you know what was in those pipes? Brine! Salt water!
121. FREYMAN: (WONDERMENT) The same thing our early settlers used to preserve their meat.

122. JOHN: We're using today to keep millions of pounds of meat in frozen storage! Well now...to get back to today...and how this meat gets to your table...we start again at the packing house, where the meat is in cold storage, ready to ship.
123. FREYMAN: Naturally, it's loaded on refrigerated freight cars, too, isn't it, Johnny?
124. JOHN: Or refrigerated trucks, if the haul is a short one. Sometimes, the chilled meat is transported by train as far as it can go... then picked up by truck and taken to remote communities.
125. FREYMAN: And those freight cars have to be re-iced, too...just like those carrying food for overseas.
126. JOHN: Yes...on the average of every 24 hours. In cold weather, cars don't have to be re-iced as often.
127. FREYMAN: I used to live in a small town where every night a refrigerated freight car load of meat and milk and cheese, and other perishable foods, was left on the siding. And every morning, the delivery trucks took the food away.
128. JOHN: Sure! That's how some towns get their meat. Large cities have big cold storage warehouses, and meat coolers where trainloads of food are stored...and the grocers and wholesalers simply pick up their foods from there. And that...Mrs. Freyman is how meat is transported in America.
129. FREYMAN: Well, Johnny...I for one, am glad to know the whole exciting story. And I'm sure our CONSUMER TIME listeners are too. Now, next week we're going to hear another story...important to every homemaker listening in...
130. JOHN: What would this be?
131. FREYMAN: It's about the enrichment of white flour and bread.
132. JOHN: There's a law, isn't there, that says all white bread must be enriched with vitamins and minerals?

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133. FREYMAN: Yes...a War Food Order...for the duration.

134. JOHN: And after the war?

135. FREYMAN: Well, Johnny...we're going to talk about that...and we're going to talk about the importance of enriched bread and flour. So be sure to listen to next weeks edition of...

136. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...MONEY IN TILL

137. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME!

138. SOUND: CASH REGISTER

139. JOHN: How your money buys a living in wartime.

140. SOUND: CASH REGISTER....CLOSE DRAWER.

141. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Christine Kempton is presented by the War Food Administration through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations. This broadcast period for CONSUMER TIME has been made available as a public service.

This is the National Broadcasting Company.

153. JOHN: How your money ~~buys~~ a living in wartime!

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